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REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-24 and 26-49 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 3-24 and 26-46 are allowed. Claims 47-49 are rejected. Claims 18 and 47-49 are currently amended. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

The Office objected to the drawings under 37 CFR 1.83(a) for failing to show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. In particular, the Office suggests that the "new multi-protocol label switching label" and "label indicator" of the "communication message" are not shown in the drawings. Applicant submits that support for those features is in Fig. 3C. In particular, step (364) illustrates that a new label is inserted into the packet, and step (366) illustrates that the indicator is set to indicate that the packet is labeled. Further, claims 47-49 have been amended to take the form of method claims which more closely resemble the steps illustrated in Fig. 3C. Withdrawal of the objection to the drawings is therefore requested.

The Office objected to claim 18 for depending upon claim 19 rather than claim 17. This informality has been corrected as requested.

Claims 47-49 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 as being directed to non-statutory subject matter. In particular, the Office suggests that the "communication message" is functional descriptive material. Claims 47-49 have been amended to take the form of method claims reciting a method for label allocation by an upstream device by generating the communication message. Support for the presently claimed method is in Fig. 3C and the associated

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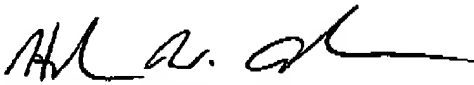
description in the specification at pp. 9-10. Since claims 47-49 are now directed to a method rather than the communication message itself it is suggested that the rejection is no longer applicable. Withdrawal of the rejection is therefore requested.

Applicants have made a diligent effort to place the claims in condition for allowance. However, should there remain unresolved issues that require adverse action, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone Holmes W. Anderson, Applicants' Attorney at 978-264-4001 (X305) so that such issues may be resolved as expeditiously as possible.

For these reasons, and in view of the above amendments, this application is now considered to be in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Date

  
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